CFC

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME
30 AUGUST 2025
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VS FULHAM

FEED THE

PHANTOM

SO PRECISE IT'S SCARY

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GET IN

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ENZO MARESCA

HEAD COACH

Welcome to Stamford Bridge, everyone, including Marco Silva and his Fulham team, as we prepare for another London derby this afternoon.

We know we can expect a difficult game from our neighbours. They won here last year and they have drawn both games so far this season from losing positions, so we have to be focused completely from the start to the end today if we want to take all three points.

In our last game, at West Ham United, I was very pleased with our reaction after a difficult start. We lost Cole during the warm-up and then we conceded an early goal, but you could see the confidence the players had in our game plan – they stuck to it and we quickly found our way into the match. In the end, we produced a very strong, dominant performance and we were pleased with the victory.

I was happy with the balance of the team and we need to continue like this now as the season continues. I said after the first game that I expect us to be better day after day, and that remains the same. It is still very early in the campaign – we have four points from our first two games and we want to keep going and keep winning. We never take our minds off the challenge in front of us, which is always the next game. It is an exciting time for us all at Chelsea and we are working hard to continue getting better and better.

Thank you for your support in these first two games. We understand that when you begin the season with consecutive derbies it is extra important for the fans to see the passion and the commitment on the pitch, and to win games. It was great for us all to celebrate together on the pitch at West Ham and now we want to feel the joy of our first home victory of the season. We will need you behind us throughout as we fight for the points today.

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CARLING

REECE JAMES

CAPTAIN

The London derbies keep coming at the beginning of this season. This is the third in a row, after Palace and West Ham, and we've got Brentford away straight after the international break, so it's been an intense start but we wouldn't want it any other way.

The first two games have been very different. We couldn't quite find a goal against Palace here, but we carved out some really strong chances and we played at a very good moment for them, having just won the Community Shield and starting the new season as FA Cup holders. Even so, we felt we had the opportunities to win it and we went in to the West Ham game determined to take all three points.

It wasn't easy to come from behind, especially after having to change the starting line-up just before kick-off, but I thought we played really well. We took our chances well, from open play and from set-pieces, and everyone was out to show what we're about. I think that has to be the blueprint for us now and we'll keep pushing to improve game by game.

It's been great to see the new signings settling in, and making an impact as well, with Joao scoring a goal and Estevao getting an assist in the West Ham game. The whole team played really well that night and it was good to see Wes Fofana back on the pitch in the second half after coming back from his injury too.

We've got depth in the squad and a lot of belief in what we are capable of, and it's now about showing that on the pitch, week after week. Fulham will be a tough opponent – they're hard to beat and they always have a game plan, so it's on us to make sure we are all on it from minute one.

It's also another big game for the fans and we look forward to a derby atmosphere at the Bridge. We'll be fighting for you on the pitch to try and make sure we go into the first international break in a strong position.

We'll be looking to reassert our dominance in our closest London derby – with less than two miles between Stamford Bridge and Craven Cottage – after suffering a first home defeat against Fulham since 1979 last season

HEAD-TO-HEAD

WON	DRAWN	LOST
52	27	11

SCORED	CONCEDED
144	76

COMPLETE RECORD

	Pld	W	D	L	F	A
League (h)	40	23	14	3	61	27
League (a)	40	25	9	6	72	40
FA Cup	6	2	2	2	7	7
League Cup	4	2	2	0	4	2

Tiago and Claude Makelele celebrate our fourth goal in a 4-1 win at Craven Cottage in November 2004

DID YOU KNOW?

Only five players have moved permanently between Fulham and Chelsea in the Premier League era. Mark Schwarzer, Marcus Bettinelli and Tosin Adarabioyo joined us from our neighbours, while Jon Harley and Bjarne Goldbaek moved from the Bridge to Craven Cottage.

LEAGUE DOUBLES

Chelsea have recorded more league doubles over Fulham than against any other side.

Chelsea (15) 1911/12, 1925/26, 1950/51, 1951/52, 1959/60, 1964/65, 1965/66, 1983/84, 2003/04, 2004/05, 2009/10, 2013/14, 2018/19, 2020/21, 2023/24

Fulham None

Chelsea's all-time top scorer in this fixture is Frank Lampard (9).

MILESTONE MATCHES

First league meeting
Fulham 1-0 Chelsea, 1910/11, Division Two

Biggest CFC league win
Chelsea 4-0 Fulham, 1925/26 & 1983/84, both Division Two

Biggest FFC league win
Fulham 3-1 Chelsea, 1976/77, Division Two

Biggest crowd at the Bridge
69,987 (Chelsea 3-0 Fulham), 1938/39, FA Cup

Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink was the first Chelsea player to score in a Premier League fixture between the sides. He was on target in a 1-1 draw at Craven Cottage in September 2001.

DID YOU KNOW?

John Boyle replaced George Graham in our 3-0 win at Fulham on 28 August 1965, becoming the first substitute to come on for Chelsea in a competitive game.

RECENT MEETINGS

	Premier League	
Season	**Home**	**Away**
2018/19	W 2-0	W 2-1
2020/21	W 2-0	W 1-0
2022/23	D 0-0	L 1-2
2023/24	W 1-0	W 2-0
2024/25	L 1-2	W 2-1

Armando Broja - who later joined Fulham on loan - scores Chelsea's second goal in our 2-0 win at Craven Cottage in October 2023

Founded 1879
Nickname The Cottagers
Stadium Craven Cottage
PL 2024/25 11th
Best PL 7th (2008/09)

LAST LEAGUE LINE-UP (4-2-3-1)

vs MANCHESTER UNITED PREMIER LEAGUE 24.08.25

LAST FIVE RESULTS

Date	Opposition	Result
30.07.25	Al-Ittihad (n)*	W 4-2
09.08.25	Eintracht Frankfurt (h)*	W 1-0
16.08.25	Brighton & Hove Albion (a)	D 1-1
24.08.25	Manchester United (h)	D 1-1
27.08.25	Bristol City (CC, h)	W 2-0

** pre-season friendlies*

1

BERND LENO
Position Goalkeeper
Age 33
Nationality German
Last club Arsenal
Premier League apps/c sheets
2025/26 2/0 All-time 215/48

23

BENJAMIN LECOMTE
Position Goalkeeper
Age 34
Nationality French
Last club Montpellier
Premier League apps/c sheets
2025/26 0/0 All-time 0/0

2

KENNY TETE
Position Defender
Age 29
Nationality Dutch
Last club Lyon
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/0 All-time 91/2

3

CALVIN BASSEY
Position Defender
Age 25
Nationality Nigerian
Last club Ajax
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/0 All-time 66/2

5

JOACHIM ANDERSEN
Position Defender
Age 29
Nationality Danish
Last club Crystal Palace
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/0 All-time 167/4

15

JORGE CUENCA
Position Defender
Age 25
Nationality Spanish
Last club Villarreal
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 1/0 All-time 9/0

21

TIMOTHY CASTAGNE
Position Defender
Age 29
Nationality Belgian
Last club Leicester City
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/0 All-time 151/6

30

RYAN SESSEGNON
Position Defender
Age 25
Nationality English
Last club Tottenham Hotspur
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 1/0 All-time 90/8

ANTONEE ROBINSON

Position Defender
Age 28
Nationality American
Last club Wigan Athletic
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 1/0 All-time 137/0

HARRISON REED

Position Midfielder
Age 30
Nationality English
Last club Southampton
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 0/0 All-time 124/3

TOM CAIRNEY

Position Midfielder
Age 34
Nationality Scottish
Last club Blackburn Rovers
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 1/0 All-time 145/8

SANDER BERGE

Position Midfielder
Age 27
Nationality Norwegian
Last club Burnley
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/0 All-time 99/3

SASA LUKIC

Position Midfielder
Age 29
Nationality Serbian
Last club Torino
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/0 All-time 68/1

JOSH KING

Position Midfielder
Age 18
Nationality England
Source Fulham
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/0 All-time 10/0

EMILE SMITH ROWE

Position Midfielder
Age 25
Nationality English
Last club Arsenal
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/1 All-time 116/19

RAUL JIMENEZ

Position Forward
Age 34
Nationality Mexican
Last club Wolves
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/0 All-time 119/59

HARRY WILSON

Position Forward
Age 28
Nationality Welsh
Last club Liverpool
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/0 All-time 122/19

RODRIGO MUNIZ

Position Forward
Age 24
Nationality Brazilian
Last club Flamengo
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/1 All-time 59/18

ADAMA TRAORE

Position Forward
Age 29
Nationality Spanish
Last club Wolves
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 1/0 All-time 248/14

ALEX IWOBI

Position Forward
Age 29
Nationality Nigerian
Last club Everton
Premier League apps/gls
2025/26 2/0 All-time 293/31

MARCO SILVA

Age 48
Nationality Portuguese
Last club Everton
Appointed July 2021

RECORD vs CHELSEA
WON 3 DRAWN 2 LOST 7

CHELSEA
FOOTBALL CLUB

THRILL SEEKER

Jamie Gittens had goosebumps when he was warming up ahead of his Chelsea debut at Stamford Bridge. Our new winger tells us why football should always be fun and describes the feeling of bringing the supporters to their feet

INTERVIEW • DOMINIC BLISS

Let's begin at the beginning. How did you first get into football?

It started off when my older sister, Chante, joined a team – at that age they were a mixed team – and I got involved with them a little bit. From that day, I just started to love football and played every day at home – in the house, at the park, everywhere.

My parents didn't really push me too much, I was just having fun, which is the best thing as a kid. I had no pressure to do anything.

This was in Reading. At first, I played in my area, Emmer Green, and then I used to play for Caversham Trents for like a year maybe. After that, I went to a team called Woodley Zebras for another year and from there I joined the academy at Reading.

Who were your favourite footballers at that time?

I think it probably has to be Cristiano Ronaldo, although I still watch Neymar to this day. So I think Neymar's my favourite player but I don't actually watch that much of anyone... Eden Hazard sometimes on YouTube, when he was at Chelsea. It's a bit of everyone, to be honest.

These are players that get you on the edge of your seat, who aren't afraid to introduce some magic.

Yeah, I try not to lose my joy for the game because I have fun doing it, and I don't want to lose that. If two or three people can dribble it makes the game more exciting. So I want to be that player to make it a bit more exciting

Do you notice when the crowd goes up a bit when they've seen something and you just hear that kind of ripple?

Yeah, I hear it a little bit. My mum and dad were telling me that when they're in the stadium they can also see everyone standing up when I get the ball, so that's nice to hear.

That's the beauty of being a winger.

Exactly, yeah. Our job is to take on our man and create something, whether that's crossing the ball or combining with a team-mate in the box, or going one on one. You've got to create chances for the team, by passing, making runs in behind, just mixing it up a little bit.

In the Bundesliga, your stats showed that you were very good in one-on-one situations. Do you enjoy the individual battle within the team game?

Yeah, I like that. I don't know why, but since I was young I've always liked to go one-on-one. It's been my thing to do. I get a little thrill from it, so if I get tackled it doesn't really bother me. I just want to go again and try to beat him. I'm always just trying to mix it up.

Do you remember a moment when you noticed that you had a bit of talent, and might have a chance of becoming a professional footballer?

I'm not sure... probably when I went to Man City at 14. That's when I realised, okay, I'm around a lot better players than before and I'm showing out a little bit more than them. I think that's when I realised that I'd got a real chance of making it in the pro game.

Did you have a spell in the Academy here as well?

Mmm, not really. When I was eight, so it was like the pre-academy, the development centre.

Was it about benchmarking yourself against top young players in your time at City?

Yeah, back then it was very competitive in training because everyone in my team was so good – they're still good now! They all play in the Premier League, Championship or League One now, so that shows the level of players that I was around. In my team there was Rico Lewis, James McAtee, Callum Doyle, Liam Delap for a year, Cole Palmer as well.

After two years in the Man City academy, you moved to Borussia Dortmund. What was behind your decision to go to Germany at 16?

I think it was just a chance to try and play football – pro football – at a younger age and try and gain some experience, and life skills as well – a new language, a new culture. I was just trying to expand my knowledge. I lived in the club's youth house for two years. Everyone from Under-14s to Under-18s was there – I think there were maybe 50 or 60 rooms. And after two years, I moved to my apartment.

> SINCE I WAS YOUNG I'VE ALWAYS LIKED TO GO ONE-ON-ONE. IT'S BEEN MY THING TO DO AND I GET A LITTLE THRILL FROM IT

How much did you grow up in that period?

First of all, no one speaks English and back then there was also Covid. So I couldn't really go outside and see the area as much as I wanted to, but I learned how to be more independent, like doing my own clothes and everything like that.

I imagine it's competitive too, with so many young players fighting for places, wondering if they were going to break through.

I didn't really think about that too much, to be honest. I was just having fun, and I was working hard with the team. It was in my first or second season with the first team when I realised how to really focus and try to stamp my place in the team.

Were the coaches there good with you?

Yeah, they were, especially my Under-19s coach, Mike Tullberg. He coached me for three years. He really understood me, took me in, talked to me, and gave me help. And then he pushed me to the first team, so that really gave my confidence a real boost.

Presumably he had a word with the manager or, you know, perhaps they meet all the time and he's said, "Jamie's one to look at."

Yeah, that's it. I think the coaches and higher people talk, so I think he was just telling them to keep a look-out for me.

Did you ever wonder if they were watching all this progress back home?

Not really, you know, because I feel like everyone in England just watches the Premier League. So I didn't really think that they would be watching me, apart from maybe for like the big games against Bayern Munich, or Bayer Leverkusen, or something.

Do you remember the first time you played in Der Klassiker against Bayern Munich?

Yeah, I came on in minute 60, I think. I was 18, at the Allianz Arena. So that was also a good experience for me, to play against the best team in the Bundesliga. The atmosphere was really big, and although we lost the game it was a real eye-opener to what was to come.

What were your most important moments in Germany?

I would say getting to the Champions League final. That was the biggest thing for me – to be in a Champions League final, where I played five minutes, but just to be a part of that whole journey from the group stage and playing some games. Maybe I wasn't playing as much as I wanted to in the later stages, but just to go to Wembley was big – to be on the pitch was like a dream come true.

I think that opened a lot of English eyes to you as well, because the commentators on British TV were saying there was this young English player coming off the bench, and talking about what a big moment it was for you.

Yeah, of course. People probably didn't know that I was English, they thought I was German! I was there for five years and that whole journey, that whole process, was really good to be a part of. I learned so many things from that time, and from other people as well.

Apart from that, I would say the other big moment was almost winning the league – almost! We lost that on the

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Citadines Berawa Beach Bali

last day and I was injured throughout the season but I came back and did my job for, I think, three or four months, then got injured again. But that process – being part of the team that nearly won the league – it's sad but it will always be in my head.

You won the European Under-19 Championship with England in 2022 as well, so you always had that connection with home, through international football.

Yeah, because I've been in the England system since I was 15, so I've known the styles of play, the culture. I've learned it since young, so even when I go there now to the national team, it's like home because I know what they expect of me in the England national teams.

You have Caribbean roots as well, so you've got a very global reach!

Yeah, my parents are from Barbados, so I try to go there when I can. It's not often because of football, but when I can, I try – so I go in the summer normally.

Is there a big football scene in Barbados?

Yeah, there's always football on in the stores and the restaurants and stuff. There is always football going on – Premier League, Bundesliga also.

Is it exciting to come back and play in the Premier League?

Yeah, it is. It's something that I've always dreamt of doing because I'm from here... and to play for Chelsea is even bigger.

How did you enjoy your first few games at the Bridge? You've had a couple friendlies and then the first Premier League game against Palace.

It's been really, really good. I was excited for all the games. I'm so happy to be on the pitch, I was getting goosebumps in the warm-up and stuff. I was like a little kid stepping on the pitch.

What are your hopes and aspirations for your time at Chelsea?

First of all, I just want to try and improve as a player, push myself to the max every day in training, try and work hard for the team. Then, in the seasons ahead, to try to win as much as possible with this great team because everyone here is so good and I'm certain we can win a lot of things together.

And keep exciting those fans...

Exactly!

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LEGENDS BACK IN ACTION AT THE BRIDGE

Old rivalries will be reignited when Chelsea FC Legends take on Liverpool FC Legends at Stamford Bridge on Saturday 11 October 2025.

In a rematch of the Legends fixture at Anfield earlier this year, Chelsea Legends will be looking to avenge that defeat in a contest that will be raising funds for the Chelsea FC Foundation and the Chelsea Players' Trust, which supports the welfare of those who made the club what it is today.

Forming part of the club's 120th anniversary celebrations, a host of Chelsea Legends will be returning to Stamford Bridge, including our 2012 Champions League-winning manager Roberto Di Matteo and captain John Terry.

"I am delighted to be managing the Legends team once again," said Di Matteo. "We will be aiming to avenge the defeat at Anfield in March, putting on a fantastic occasion for our supporters and raising vital funds for the Chelsea FC Foundation and the Chelsea Players' Trust."

Terry added: "Chelsea versus Liverpool provided me with some of the most highly contested battles throughout my career and I am excited to be reigniting those old rivalries for charity in October. As captain of the club for over 15 years, the Chelsea FC Foundation and the Chelsea Players' Trust are both close to my heart."

Tickets have already gone on sale to members and season ticket holders, with the remaining tickets going on general sale on Monday (scan the QR code above for more details).

Laura Cordingley, Chief Executive of the Chelsea FC Foundation, said: "We are extremely excited to be hosting this Legends match at Stamford Bridge as part of the club's 120th anniversary.

"This will be a special celebration of the club's history while supporting the work of the Chelsea FC Foundation and the Chelsea Players' Trust. Funds raised from the match will be crucial in enabling us to continue our work positively impacting our communities and supporting the welfare of Chelsea FC's former players."

Message from the CPO

We announced a while ago that it is our intention to migrate elements of our shareholder administration to a share management platform. This has ended up being a slower process than expected due to the number of shareholders we can no longer trace as they have moved, or in some cases passed away.

If you or a shareholder you know who hasn't received an AGM notice in the last two years, or a newsletter, please ask them to contact us via **comms@chelseapitchowners.com** so we can update the register. This is, of course, in the shareholder's interest as they will not be able to vote on any subject if we can't contact them.

Please continue to spread the word about CPO and encourage friends, family and fellow fans to buy shares.

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IN FOCUS

PEDRO NETO

The form player in the early stages of this summer's triumphant FIFA Club World Cup campaign was Pedro Neto, whose sharpness and dynamism – undimmed by the extreme heat – was simply too much for our opponents.

The Portuguese winger's first sporting successes as a boy came on the roller hockey field in Viana do Castelo, the small seaside town on the Atlantic Ocean where he grew up. In the years after he decided to prioritise football in an attempt to make a career of it, the parents of other players in youth games would comment that he still looked like was on skates when he ran at defenders.

"When I run I always have the tendency of leaning forward and this comes a little bit from hockey," he explained.

Neto has stated his love of the tempo of English football, and shown he is just as comfortable getting chalk on his boots on the left wing, or cutting inside from the right wing. After starring at Wolves from 2019 to 2024, he moved to Chelsea last season, expressing a desire to do "amazing things" here.

"I always looked at Chelsea with big eyes, thinking 'What a club!'" he said. "We can achieve a lot of things here."

Now, aged 25, he is embarking on his second campaign at Stamford Bridge as a world champion.

OVER LAND AND SEA

WORDS • DOMINIC BLISS

Football is the global game – and the story of Chelsea Football Club has had chapters written all over the world. In the latest of our new series, we take a look at two men who emerged from Ivory Coast to make their mark at Stamford Bridge

For Didier Drogba, 2012 was very much a tale of two penalty kicks.

There was the famous strike that won the Champions League for Chelsea in May, at the end of a dramatic shoot-out in Munich, but there was also the spot kick he blazed over the bar three months earlier in the second half of the Africa Cup of Nations final in Libreville, which his Ivory Coast side went on to lose to Zambia.

One of his dreams came true that year; the other eluded him.

Within this context, the emotions on his face as he wheeled away in Munich become more complex. It was a moment of Chelsea redemption, yes – he had been sent off in the 2008 final in Moscow before we fell to a penalty shoot-out defeat to Manchester United. But it was also a moment of personal redemption, as his shot from 12 yards secured silverware for his team just a few months after he had stood with his hands on his hips in the orange of his national team in the Democratic Republic of Congo, wondering what might have been.

Sentimentality was never far from the surface when Drogba discussed his homeland on the southern coast of West Africa. He had moved to France as a young boy, living with his uncle Michel Goba – a professional footballer who he hoped to emulate one day.

"He was playing in the French Division Two and he was an example to me," said Drogba. "I was living with him and everything he did, I tried to copy."

Later, when Drogba was an all-conquering Chelsea centre-forward, and master of the big occasion, he would return to Ivory Coast as a superstar, unable ever to walk the streets of Abidjan unnoticed.

"When I was a small boy in Ivory Coast, things were very simple," he told me in 2013. "I could go into the centre and nobody would even pay attention because nobody even noticed I was there. I would be doing normal things, playing out on the streets for hours and hours.

"Now I can't drive into town because people will stop my car. I can't go there with my kids because they will be scared by all the people coming over to me. Of course, it's nice because you get the attention of people, but your life is not the same anymore.

"I can talk about it and I can give you some examples, but you won't believe it. You would have to come and see it with your own eyes.

"Let me explain something to you: when I missed that penalty in the last final [2012], my parents told me that somebody had a heart attack and died, from watching it. Can you imagine being told that?

"You don't understand unless you've experienced it – that's why I say you have to see it to believe it, because

A mural of Didier Drogba in Abidjan at the height of his fame

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WHEN WE ARRIVED THERE WE GOT BARE FOOT TO PLAY IN THE BEGINNING

Salomon Kalou

it goes beyond football, beyond sport. It's more than that. The passion! I've seen people crying for players like Yaya and Kolo Toure, Salomon Kalou, for me. People are crying just to see us and when they touch us they go into a different state. I don't know – it's the passion... the passion."

When he said it goes beyond football, he wasn't exaggerating. In fact, he was understating why that generation of Ivorian footballers was so adored. In 2006, Drogba returned home to accept the first of his two African Player of the Year awards and capitalised on the celebratory mood of the public, as well as the interest by the president, to request, along with his international team-mates, that the next national-team fixture be played in the north of the country, territory that had been a rebel stronghold during the period of civil unrest between 2002 and 2007.

It's a remarkable thing when a sporting achievement can help to calm a nation divided by politics and war, but that is what Drogba and his team-mates achieved as the national team's qualification for the 2006 World Cup united the nation through a sense of patriotic sporting pride.

"Everywhere you go in Ivory Coast, people talk about the national team," he said of that era. "People talk about the players more than they do about the politicians. Can you imagine? We are like the ambassadors of this country and that's why they put all their faith in us."

The secret behind that generation who brought Ivory Coast to two consecutive World Cups and the brink of Africa Cup of Nations glory more than once was a shared upbringing. All but a handful of their players in that period came through Jean-Marc Guillou's academy at ASEC, the leading club in Abidjan. Drogba was one of the few who did not, and perhaps his unique, unpolished approach to the game was the x-factor they needed to offer the team an extra dimension. Another Chelsea forward from the time, Salomon Kalou, told me all about the academy on which a golden generation was built.

"We were training there like we train here – it was the same kind of training," Kalou explained in 2010. "So when you come to Europe you don't have that time learning a new kind of training and that helps the players from Jean-Marc Guillou Academy, it's set up like a European academy and when you come to Europe from there you know already what's going on.

"The main problem for a lot of African teams has been how to position themselves tactically but coming from there we knew about tactics already, compared to other kids who had never been at a club like that. We knew how to position ourselves, when to play one-twos, when to go on ourselves and when to play for the team – we knew all this before we came to Europe. So it helped us to develop quickly compared to other African players.

"Of the players who are always in the Ivory Coast team, apart from Didier who grew up in France and Abdoulaye Meite, most of them are from this academy, so that's how important it is."

But it wasn't all about replicating European football, as Kalou added.

Kalou (left) scored 60 goals in 254 Chelsea appearances, while Drogba (pictured after winning the 2006 African Footballer of the Year award) managed 164 goals in 381 games for us

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Contrasting emotions for Drogba after missing a penalty in the Africa Cup of Nations and scoring the winning spot kick in the 2012 Champions League final (right)

> PEOPLE ARE CRYING JUST TO SEE US AND WHEN THEY TOUCH US THEY GO INTO A DIFFERENT STATE. IT'S THE PASSION... THE PASSION
>
> Didier Drogba

"When we arrived there we got bare foot to play in the beginning. He said you have better feeling for the ball when you play bare foot and after, when you play in boots, you will adapt better to the ball. So it was his choice and I think also because of the conditions in Africa, all those kids didn't have the money to buy shoes for themselves.

"For him it was a good way of adapting to African coaching and the idea was to develop players with a better touch on the ball. If you wanted to get boots you had to earn it by getting what they called degrees, like you get at school, by doing some trick with the ball. If you passed the test you got your boots."

Between them, Drogba and Kalou won five Premier League titles (four of them Drogba's), including a League and FA Cup Double in 2009/10, eight FA Cup winners' medals (four each), and four League Cup winner's medals (three for Drogba). Crucially, both men started our first triumphant Champions League final in 2012 – the success that crowned their Chelsea era.

For Drogba, the penalty that sealed that victory was his last kick before departing the club, although he later returned for one more season of silverware in 2014/15. Despite missing from the spot three months earlier in that traumatising Africa Cup of Nations final, he relished the opportunity to step up for Chelsea when it mattered most.

"As I walked up to take that penalty, I was just thinking: 'This is the last kick of the game because, if I score, we win it.' I wasn't thinking it was my last kick for Chelsea. Maybe afterwards I was thinking a little bit about that, but when I was on the pitch I wasn't.

"I hadn't made my mind up to leave at that point. It was a very difficult decision, but the circumstances – winning the trophy and giving everything for the club – maybe helped. I just took time to enjoy the moment, to realise what we had achieved and then, the next day, I said, 'Okay, it's done.'"

Kalou left Stamford Bridge that summer too, and in the years since only one Ivorian international has played for our first team, and that was Jeremie Boga's sole appearance in 2017.

The impression left by Drogba and Kalou contributed to a huge rise in popularity for Chelsea in Ivory Coast and West Africa more generally, as they combined with the likes of Nigerian star, John Mikel Obi, and Ghanaian icon, Michael Essien, to add a new facet to our club's identity.

And, in the words of Drogba, it was all about "the passion... the passion."

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LEE BACK IN THE SADDLE FOR CHARITY BIKE RIDE

Former Blues defender David Lee is a regular at Stamford Bridge as one of our matchday hosts, but today his trip to west London will be very different.

Leading up to this fixture, the 55-year-old has embarked on a 130-mile cycle ride with his friend Paul Gitsham, travelling from their village in Saltford near Bristol and, if all goes to plan, arriving here at the Bridge in time for kick-off today.

While Lee has long been a keen cyclist, he's not taking on this challenge for leisure: he is raising money for the British Heart Foundation and the Chelsea Players' Trust.

Earlier this year, Lee was diagnosed with severe coronary artery disease, and within a matter of weeks he was undergoing a triple heart bypass.

"The procedure saved my life," he says. "I remember waking up in recovery, with tubes in my chest and a line of stitches across my sternum, and I felt an overwhelming mixture of fear, relief and gratitude.

"The recovery process has obviously been very difficult, both physically and emotionally, but I'm feeling good and I really wanted to be able to give something back to two causes very close to my heart – both literally and figuratively!"

Lee says he wouldn't still be with us without the British Heart Foundation, whose research and work saves lives every day. And as an ex-Blue, he has seen the importance of the Chelsea Players' Trust, who covered his medical costs for the surgery and have continued to offer him support.

"The time I've spent recovering has given me time to reflect, and I don't want this chapter of my life to be defined by the surgery – I want it to be about what I choose to do with my second chance.

"It's going to be a huge challenge completing this – I know the start of the route, but the last 100 miles is going a bit into the unknown for me! But that feeling when I know we're getting closer to the Bridge is going to be amazing, although I'm sure I'll be quite sore by then.

"So, whichever team you're supporting today, please consider donating. Every pound raised will be evenly split between the British Heart Foundation and the Chelsea Players' Trust, and your support means everything."

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LEGACY

RESHAPING THE GAME

A century on from the radical alteration of the offside law, we take a trip back in time to the season when football changed forever with Chelsea at the vanguard

WORDS • DOMINIC BLISS

A hundred years ago, Chelsea attracted the biggest average gate in English football, despite being in Division Two.

The fact that David Calderhead's side began the 1925/26 campaign with a 14-game unbeaten run – including a 6-0, a 5-0, a 5-1 and two 4-0 wins – certainly didn't harm the attendances at Stamford Bridge, which averaged 32,355 over the course of the season. That total seems low by today's standards but it was enough to top the 31,614 averaged by Manchester City, the best-attended top-flight club that year.

So what was the secret behind the high-scoring, fast-paced football that brought the crowds flocking to Chelsea?

It may have been down to a rule change.

In the summer of 1925, the football world was preparing for the new season with a transformational amendment to the laws of the game in mind. From now on, a player would be onside if they received the ball with two instead of the previously decreed three opponents between themselves and the opposition goal. Assuming one of those players would nearly always be the goalkeeper, it effectively meant that staying the right side of one outfield player would now be enough to remain onside.

The intention was to make it easier for attacking teams to create chances after the average number of goals per game had begun to drop in the early 1920s. It became clear that a number of sides had worked out a way to set an effective offside trap to thwart opposition forwards under the old rule. This had led to a huge chunk of the action taking place within a small portion of the pitch either side of the centre-circle. It also led to a tedious number of stoppages, as referees whistled again and again for offside when teams failed to beat the trap.

The new rule aimed to free up attacking players and was trialled in an exhibition game between Arsenal and Chelsea at Highbury in January 1925. Both clubs had a spare weekend, having been knocked out of the FA Cup, and were willing to be the first to see how they could make the most of the new found freedom for their attacking players.

A crowd of 10,000 attended and the programme for the game included a questionnaire to fill out and send by post to the Arsenal manager. Supporters were asked to put an X in the box next to their preferred choice: the old rule, the new rule, or a third option which entailed painting a 40-yard line in each half, behind which a forward could not be offside.

The trial wasn't a high-scoring game, as the new rule's advocates might have hoped – Chelsea won 1-0 – nor was it a chaotic, shapeless affair as its detractors had predicted. In fact, the experiment was largely deemed a success.

"The effect was to produce more dangerous attacks with more opportunities of shooting," reported the *West*

David Calderhead was Chelsea's manager between 1907 and 1933

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London Observer, pointing out that the move for the winning goal had exploited the changes in the law.

"Plenty of forward passes were taken advantage of, and [Willie] Brown ran through with only one back to beat, and when near goal he passed for [Andy] Wilson to score without trouble."

The two London clubs were happy to steal a march on the rest of the Football League with this early trial run, and their form when the law was changed at the beginning of the following season suggests they might have spent the intervening months strategising for the new shape of the game.

Arsenal grabbed the headlines for their approach under Herbert Chapman, which helped introduce a system change from the old 2-3-5 "pyramid" formation to a new 'WM' shape as their centre-half dropped back to become what later became known as a centre-back.

Chelsea did something similar under the radar in Division Two. It involved the team dropping deep to the edge of their own box out of possession, with full-backs pushed wide to mark the opposition wingers and the centre-half there to deal with balls down the middle. The wing-halves would pick up the opposing inside-forwards, while a forward player dropped in to midfield to cover the gap that would otherwise have opened between defence and attack. His presence meant the team were able to spring counter-attacks after winning the ball, knocking it short to the midfield creator – Andy Wilson, in Chelsea's case – who would surprise the opposition with guided diagonal passes to one wing, while the other winger arrived in the box alongside the centre-forward to attack the resulting cross.

Our 6-0 win over Port Vale in the third game of the season was an exemplar of this new, faster approach.

"Chelsea gave a masterly display at Hanley, where they defeated Port Vale by six goals to none," reported the *Daily Mail*.

"It was a triumph of tactics. The method of attack which turned out so successful was for [Bob] Turnbull and the two outside men to lie well up the field, with [inside-forwards] Wilson and [Albert] Thain well back and playing principally the role of providers for the advance trio."

Some purists, pining for a late Victorian footballing idyll, reflected that an element of the artistry of the game had been sacrificed in favour of ruthlessness and speed, but the interwar period was about embracing efficiency and production and sport was no different.

Andy Wilson was Chelsea's midfield creator in 1925/26

Football had changed, just as the lawmakers had hoped, and Chelsea were at the vanguard of the new-look game. After 13 games, we were top of the table, leading scorers in the division, and boasted the tightest defence as well.

The others eventually caught up, and a mid-season drop in form saw us fall to third in the table, where we remained until the end of the campaign. In those days, there were two promotion places and no play-offs – the sprint start had only served us so well and Chelsea supporters had to wait another four years for promotion.

However, the law change had the desired effect as goalmouth action increased drastically from the previous season. Chelsea's total league goals rose from 51 in 1924/25 to 76 in 1925/26, while the Football League average rose from 2.58 goals per game to 3.69 in the same period.

The whole episode burnished our reputation as a pioneering club, always embracing the next challenge with relish. Perhaps that's why the crowds chose to head to Stamford Bridge even during those years in the second tier.

Football League Division Two 1924/25

			HOME					AWAY						
		Pld	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GA	Pts
1	Leicester City	42	15	4	2	58	9	9	7	5	32	23	2.812	59
2	Man Utd	42	17	3	1	40	6	6	8	7	17	17	2.478	57
3	Derby County	42	15	3	3	49	15	7	8	6	22	21	1.972	55
4	Portsmouth	42	7	13	1	28	14	8	5	8	30	36	1.16	48
5	**Chelsea**	**42**	**11**	**8**	**2**	**31**	**12**	**5**	**7**	**9**	**20**	**25**	**1.378**	**47**
6	Wolves	42	14	1	6	29	19	6	5	10	26	32	1.078	46
7	Southampton	42	12	8	1	29	10	1	10	10	11	26	1.111	44
8	Port Vale	42	12	4	5	34	19	5	4	12	14	37	0.857	42
9	South Shields	42	9	6	6	33	21	3	11	7	9	17	1.105	41
10	Hull City	42	12	6	3	40	14	3	5	13	10	35	1.02	41
11	Clapton Orient	42	8	7	6	22	13	6	5	10	20	29	1	40
12	Fulham	42	11	6	4	26	15	4	4	13	15	41	0.732	40
13	Middlesbrough	42	6	10	5	22	21	4	9	8	14	23	0.818	39
14	The Wednesday	42	12	3	6	36	23	3	5	13	14	33	0.892	38
15	Barnsley	42	8	8	5	30	23	5	4	12	16	36	0.779	38
16	Bradford City	42	11	6	4	26	13	2	6	13	11	37	0.74	38
17	Blackpool	42	8	5	8	37	26	6	4	11	28	35	1.065	37
18	Oldham Athletic	42	9	5	7	24	21	4	6	11	11	30	0.686	37
19	Stockport	42	10	6	5	26	15	3	5	13	11	42	0.649	37
20	Stoke	42	7	8	6	22	17	5	3	13	12	29	0.739	35
19	Crystal Palace	42	8	4	9	23	19	4	6	11	15	35	0.703	34
20	Coventry City	42	10	6	5	32	26	1	3	17	13	58	0.535	31

Football League Division Two 1925/26

			HOME					AWAY						
		Pld	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GA	Pts
1	The Wednesday	42	19	0	2	61	17	8	6	7	27	31	1.833	60
2	Derby County	42	17	2	2	57	17	8	5	8	20	25	1.833	57
3	**Chelsea**	**42**	**10**	**7**	**4**	**42**	**22**	**9**	**7**	**5**	**34**	**27**	**1.551**	**52**
4	Wolves	42	15	4	2	55	15	6	3	12	29	45	1.4	49
5	Swansea Town	42	13	6	2	50	16	6	5	10	27	41	1.35	49
6	Blackpool	42	12	6	3	41	16	5	5	11	35	53	1.101	45
7	Oldham Athletic	42	14	4	3	52	24	4	4	13	22	38	1.193	44
8	Port Vale	42	15	3	3	53	18	4	3	14	26	51	1.144	44
9	South Shields	42	11	6	4	50	29	7	2	12	24	36	1.138	44
10	Middlesbrough	42	14	1	6	56	28	7	1	13	21	40	1.132	44
11	Portsmouth	42	12	4	5	48	27	5	6	10	31	47	1.067	44
12	Preston	42	17	2	2	54	28	1	5	15	17	56	0.845	43
13	Hull City	42	11	4	6	40	19	5	5	11	23	42	1.032	41
14	Southampton	42	11	2	8	39	25	4	6	11	24	38	1	38
15	Darlington	42	9	5	7	51	31	5	5	11	21	46	0.935	38
16	Bradford City	42	9	5	7	28	26	4	5	12	19	40	0.712	36
17	Nottm Forest	42	11	4	6	38	25	3	4	14	13	48	0.698	36
18	Barnsley	42	10	7	4	38	22	2	5	14	20	62	0.69	36
19	Fulham	42	8	6	7	32	29	3	6	12	14	48	0.597	34
20	Clapton Orient	42	8	6	7	30	21	4	3	14	20	44	0.769	33
19	Stoke	42	8	5	8	32	23	4	3	14	22	54	0.701	32
20	Stockport	42	8	7	6	34	28	0	2	19	17	69	0.525	25

LONDON,
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HOUSE

THROUGH THE SUN AND RAIN

Mychelle

Singer-songwriter and lifelong Chelsea supporter

I don't remember a specific moment when I became a Chelsea fan, but in school it was mainly Man United or Arsenal, and Arsenal was just a no in my home!

My stepdad supported Chelsea and my friend at school, Christelle – the only other girl that played football – also supported them, so I came to be a fan too. My stepdad passed this year but, as a kid, I remember him screaming at the telly during Chelsea games, and all this stuff – really seeing the passion that people have for football.

One memory that immediately comes to mind, although it's not my earliest one of Chelsea, is the 2012 Champions League final. That is my favourite Chelsea moment – I watched it at Christelle's house and her mum's Arsenal, so she would come down and be like, "Ah, how are Chelsea doing now?" She was acting like she was just asking, but you could tell she was not wanting us to win!

But it was just such a big moment for us. I remember those games against Barcelona in the semis, when Torres scored the winning goal after having such a rough time up to that point. Then, in the final, Drogba scoring in his last game for us (although he came back for a bit later!).

I'm not going to lie, seeing the African players here when I was growing up was really good, and I guess that was another thing that drew me to the team. At the time we had Essien, Kalou and Mikel as well, so you're talking about a lot of African players at Chelsea at that time. Actually, speaking about that team, I remember a guy in my school always used to tease me and say I looked like Malouda!

But football in general is an ice-breaker, including in music spaces, especially when I meet another Chelsea fan. Even the fact that I play - people are always intrigued by that. "How do you sing and play football? How do you balance that?"

I always played when I was really young, at school and in the local area. We had little football games where two humps on the hill were the goals. Then, on one of my birthdays, it was just after lockdown and you were allowed to meet in groups of something like 30 around that time. So I had a party in the park and we played a football game. At the same time, the chairman of my current team happened to be in the park and he saw three girls playing among a group of guys. So he came over and said, "Do you girls play for a team?" And we were like, "No, we're just playing for fun." He said, "You should join our club," and that's how I started football again. It's been a couple of years now.

I came to see Chelsea Women against Man City at the Bridge last season, and after that game you could feel we were on the way to winning the league, we had the momentum, but to go undefeated as well was amazing.

It's great that we've had so much success, both the men and the women, but with all fans that I know, you're there for the ride, it's not just the glory. Once you are with a team, you are bound to them for life, basically. I live about 10 minutes from Arsenal and I could never support them – all my friends support Arsenal, I see the fans all the time, and I see people come and park in my area when it's a game day. But I could never support them.

It's been a good summer for Chelsea supporters and I just want to see us build on what we've started to achieve now. We've just won the FIFA Club World Cup and it feels like it's picking up again. I've always had hope that we'd lift trophies again and it feels like that's now happening.

It was horrible when everyone was saying, "Chelsea are not even in the Champions League!" So many people would throw that at me, so it'll be good to be back and I think the team feels like it's growing in a strong direction. There's a buzz and it's nice to carry that into the season.

Cole Palmer's the one at the moment. He's just such a character, without doing much. By being himself. I love that. And he's a great player, but the whole team's strong and because they are young there's so much room for growth. When you play sports, your whole mentality changes the older you get, and your discipline with everything improves so much. I feel like you'll start to see that with this Chelsea team. It will be really interesting to see them evolve and develop as a group.

> I JUST WANT TO SEE US BUILD ON WHAT WE'VE STARTED TO ACHIEVE NOW

BLUE AND WHITE ARMY

Send your messages to **cfc.programme@reachsport.com**

Happy fourth birthday to our wonderful son, **Oliver** – Chelsea mad and excited to attend his first in a lifetime of many games at the Bridge this year. Love you millions, Mum, Dad and Gabriel.

Wishing a very happy first birthday to **Sophie**! She's looking forward to continuing the weekend's celebrations with a win for the Blues!

Liam Harold was in New York celebrating the end of his GCSEs when he bumped into Reece James the day after the Blues won the Club World Cup!

Martin Young celebrated his 80th birthday this week. He's been coming to Chelsea since 1954 and is pictured with his grandsons Ethan and Luke.

Jude is only three months old and he's already got his first Chelsea kit! His dad and granddad are both season ticket holders at the Bridge.

OBITUARIES

In loving memory of **John Robert Morgan**, a true Blue. Forever in our hearts. Your passion lives on every matchday. Rest in peace, Dad.

Jon Dale followed his father as a lifelong Chelsea fan. The European away fixtures were highlights for him and friends. Sadly missed, always a Blue.

Patricia Carter, a Chelsea supporter for 76 years and season ticket holder in the East Lower, sadly passed away in May 2022 at the age of 86. Forever missed, a true Blue!

James (Jim) Spurling sadly passed away on 12 June. He joined the club as a steward in 2002 and will be missed by his colleagues and supporters in the West Stand. Our thoughts are with his wife Sandra and family.

Wishing **Michael Sheehan** a very happy 30th birthday. A Chelsea fan from day one! Love from Mum, Dad and Emma-Louise.

Happy 30th birthday, **Lily**! Have a fantastic day! Lots of love from all of your family.

Happy seventh birthday to **Jude**. Lots of love from Mum and Dad.

Happy 10th birthday, **Toby**. Love, Mummy, Daddy and Teddy.

Happy birthday to **Jill O'Callaghan**! From Ted, Tony, Joanne, Vicki, Michael and Keira.

Happy 22nd birthday, **Abigail**! Hope you have a great day! Love, Mum, Dad and Frankie.

Mason, who is four, is here today for his first-ever Chelsea match! His dad, Cal, is a lifelong Blue.

Happy ninth birthday, **Sam**. Love, Mummy, Daddy and Emilia.

My name is **Harley**, I'm six, and this is my very first Chelsea game with my dad! I love Cole Palmer – come on Chelsea!

Happy birthday, **Jo**. Hope you have a good day, thanks for being an amazing wife and mum to us. Love from your amazing husband and Shannon and Chelsea.

Congratulations on your engagement, **Vince Goyen** and **Nicki Mayle**! We are so happy for you both! Best wishes, Neil, Mason, Nicola and Lee.

Happy 12th birthday, **Tobias**! Hope you have an awesome day. Lots of love, Mum, Malakai and all your family and friends.

TODAY'S MASCOTS

RUDY

ARABELLA

LUKE

BLU

LUCAS

CRAIG

KARA

FRANK

JESSE

JASON

JACK

BODHI

GABRIEL

WOMEN

SONIA BOMPASTOR

HEAD COACH

We've got a game against AC Milan at Kingsmeadow today, which will be a good test for us before we begin our WSL season against Manchester City here at Stamford Bridge on Friday night.

The players have been working really hard in pre-season to make sure we are ready to start strongly, and we recently had a training camp in the Netherlands that was important to prepare us for what is to come. I was impressed with the mentality of the team and although we came home with a lot of fatigue, I think it's a good fatigue at that stage of our preparations.

We spent six days there and played two matches, with a lot of intense training but also some team-bonding too, which is always very important.

One of the games was behind closed doors, against Utrecht, but we also played Ajax in front of supporters and there was a lot for us to take from this. For only the second friendly game of our pre-season, I think we can say it was a good performance, even if we weren't able to come away with a win after conceding a late goal.

Of course, the result is not the most important thing when you play these matches, but I was still frustrated that we conceded the equaliser in added time at the end, after Guro Reiten had scored for us with 20 minutes to go. I told my players that with a Chelsea mentality, we shouldn't have conceded that goal and we should have won the game.

I don't want to think too much about this frustration, though, as we did a lot of positive things as a team and also

Left, Guro Reiten celebrates after scoring the opener in our 1-1 draw against Ajax earlier this month. The squad are put through their paces in the Netherlands (above left), although Nathalie Bjorn and Johanna Rytting Kaneryd (above) still had fun – and sheep herding (opposite page) was one of the more elaborate team-building activities on the trip!

individually. I was pleased with our build-up play and also with our creation, even if we could have been better in the finishing phase.

We were also able to see some of our new signings in both of our matches and I think how they played, and how they were on the trip as a whole, shows that they are in a good place in terms of understanding the game model. They know what we want to achieve as a team, what they need to achieve individually on the pitch, and I'm pleased with that. Now the main focus for us is giving them more minutes so they feel ready mentally and physically. Overall, we are in a good place.

We were also able to play some of our young players, and it really is crucial for their development for them to be involved in these games. Ajax are a really good team and for these youngsters to play first-team minutes at the highest level is a great experience for them, and they need to make sure they learn from this.

So, we came away from the game against Ajax with lots of positives. Yes, there is room for improvement – which is always there, to be fair – and now we have to keep working hard, making sure we are ready for the first game of the season.

Manchester City are a really big opponent for us to start off against, but it will be exciting to welcome them here to our home at Stamford Bridge next week. I look back at the games we played here last season and our supporters made us feel so special when we were playing here, and the players really felt this too. I hope we will have a similar experience this time.

After today's game against AC Milan, we will make sure we are ready for this test, to start the season in the best way possible. I hope we can have a good game, in front of lots of supporters, and we can share that special feeling together at the end of it.

WOMEN 2025/26

Date	Opposition		Res
AUGUST			
Sun 17	Ajax *(Friendly)*	A	1-1
Sat 30	AC Milan *(1pm, Friendly)*	H1	-
SEPTEMBER			
Fri 5	Manchester City *(7.30pm, Sky)*	H2	-
Sun 14	Aston Villa *(12noon, Sky)*	A	-
Sun 21	Leicester City *(12noon, Sky)*	H1	-
Sun 28	West Ham United *(2.30pm, BBC)*	A	-
OCTOBER			
Sat 4	Manchester United	A	-
7/8	UWCL MD1	-	-
Sat 11	Tottenham Hotspur	H1	-
15/16	UWCL MD2	-	-
NOVEMBER			
Sun 2	London City Lionesses	H2	-
Sat 8	Arsenal	A	-
11/12	UWCL MD3	-	-
Sun 16	Liverpool	A	-
19/20	UWCL MD4	-	-
DECEMBER			
Sat 6	Everton	H1	-
9/10	UWCL MD5	-	-
Sun 14	Brighton & Hove Albion	A	-
Wed 17	UWCL MD6	-	-
Sun 21	WLC QF	-	-
JANUARY			
Sun 11	West Ham United	H1	-
Sun 18	WFAC 4	-	-
Sun 25	Arsenal	H2	-
FEBRUARY			
Sun 1	Manchester City	A	-
Sun 8	Tottenham Hotspur	A	-
Sun 15	Liverpool	H1	-
MARCH			
Sun 15	Brighton & Hove Albion	H1	-
Sun 22	London City Lionesses	A	-
Sun 29	Aston Villa	H1	-
APRIL			
Sun 26	Everton	A	-
MAY			
Sun 3	Leicester City	A	-
15/16/17	Manchester United	H2	-

All games kick off at 2pm unless stated
H1 - Kingsmeadow Stadium. H2 – Stamford Bridge
UWCL – UEFA Women's Champions League
WFAC – Women's FA Cup
WLC – Women's League Cup

U21s

CALUM McFARLANE

HEAD COACH

We are now three games into the season and I'm really pleased with the boys, and their effort, their commitment, and their hunger every day. They are working really hard to try and implement the ideas we're putting across.

It's also been a really tough start, both in terms of the level of opposition we have faced and the number of games we've played in a short space of time. Last night's match, which was too late for me to cover here, was our fourth of the season, with three away games in a row, so it's been a really tough schedule and the boys have put themselves in a really good place in the league by winning the first two games of the season, against Manchester City and Newcastle United.

The performance against Manchester City was really high quality and we saw a lot of the things that we wanted to see. The game had a bit of everything. There were periods where we were on top, there were periods where City were on the top, and we had to play a different way at times because good teams will do that to you. So we were really pleased with how the lads performed well in different ways over the course of the game.

City have pretty much set the standard at Under-21s level over the last five years, having won the league four times in that period. So we knew it was going to be a really good reference for us as a team, to see where we were at and what we can do this season. I think we have a strong group and we have people that really believe in this group, so it was an opportunity to go and show how good we are.

We played a really good style, at a good tempo, with aggression throughout the game. It was really hard to pick a stand-out performer because I thought the whole group performed so well, but you've got to mention Shim [Shumaira Mheuka], who scored an unbelievable hat-trick. He scored two headers through great positioning in the box, and finishing to match, and then the last goal, which came when we were a little bit under pressure, was a very good solo effort that showed all his attributes. It was a great moment for him and he has started the season on fire, having got his fifth goal in the third game.

Newcastle was another tough fixture, and involved travelling a long distance. We started the game a bit slowly in that one, and were not quite at the races for the first 15 minutes or so, but we've got so many players who are dangerous at any moment, especially in our forward line, that you can rely on a bit of quality at any time.

We've got such a good squad this year, so we made two changes to our forward line, bringing in Jesse Derry and Dujuan Richards for Ryan Kavuma-McQueen and Leo Cardoso. We swapped the wingers and I thought it was a good time to give other lads an opportunity, after the team had played so well on the Monday night. I knew there were lads chomping at the bit to play and it worked out really well because both of them scored in the first half.

They were goals of real individual quality too. We know Dujuan's finishing is of a really high standard and Jesse had

18.08.25, Premier League 2

Chelsea 3
Mheuka 45+3, 47, 86

Manchester City 1
Samuel 78

Chelsea (4-3-3): Curd; Antwi (Olise 90+3), Murray-Campbell, Wilson, Emenalo; Harrison, McMahon, Walsh; Cardoso (D Richards 76), Mheuka (c), Kavuma-McQueen (Derry 63)

Leo Cardoso (top) on the attack in our win over Manchester City to open the season. Shumaira Mheuka scored a hat-trick in that game and he added another (above) against Shrewsbury Town in midweek

one moment in the game – a one-v-one – and he executed it so well with his left foot.

Then Leo came on and set up a goal, while Ryan came on and scored our third, before Shim got the fourth. It was a really good night for our forwards, and for the competition between them, but also a chance for them to understand the bigger picture around being able to start games or being able to come off the bench and impact games, which is really important for young attackers.

In the end, we were really ruthless on the night, scoring five goals through five different scorers, and I thought we were exceptional in the second half.

22.08.25, Premier League 2

Newcastle United 0

Chelsea 5
D Richards 16, Derry 37, Kavuma-McQueen 69, Mheuka 74, Murray-Campbell 84

Chelsea (4-3-3): Curd; Antwi (Best 86), Murray-Campbell, Wilson, Emenalo (Olise 76); Harrison, McMahon, Walsh; D Richards (Cardoso h/t); Mheuka (c), Derry (Kavuma-McQueen 58)

A few days later, we faced another away trip, this time to Shrewsbury Town in the EFL Trophy. We rotated the group a little bit to give some lads opportunities they maybe didn't have against Newcastle and City, and it was a really tough game against senior opposition, something that we need to get used to and adapt to.

It feels very different to a Premier League 2 game. The physicality and the style of the games is something we need to get used to, and that's why the EFL Trophy is such a good competition.

You face more savvy teams that know how to knock you out of your rhythm. I thought we started really brightly, scoring a great goal through Shim, which was exactly what we were looking for in terms of creating overloads. Shim was then in the right position again, just as he was against City and Newcastle for his other four goals.

Then Shrewsbury scored what I would say was a fortunate 25-yard deflection, and it knocked us a little bit. They made the game scrappy, we didn't get much control, and we probably could have been braver in those moments.

The first half ended with us missing a really good one-v-one opportunity and then the second half ended up becoming a bit of a nothing game. Midway through it, we made a mistake in our build-up and they punished us, before adding another from a set piece.

It's football and it will happen at any level, but especially when you're playing against senior professional players that have had good, long careers. The game is defined by moments and even though we weren't at our best, we also gave them sloppy goals and didn't take our opportunities, which was the complete opposite to the games against City and Newcastle. So it was a good lesson for us to learn for the future.

26.08.25, EFL Vertu Trophy

Shrewsbury Town 3
McDermott 14, Marquis 65, Boyle 72

Chelsea 1
Mheuka 10

Chelsea (3-2-4-1): Slonina; Wilson, Murray-Campbell, Emenalo (Antwi 63); Harrison, Tauriainen (Walsh h/t); Olise, Cardoso, Kavuma-McQueen (Derry 63), Best (McMahon h/t); Mheuka (c) (Ezenwata 73)

U21s 2025/26

Date	Opposition		Res
AUGUST			
Mon 18	Manchester City	H	3-1
Fri 22	Newcastle United	A	5-0
Tue 26	Shrewsbury Town *(FLT MD1)*	A	1-3
Fri 29	Aston Villa	A	-
SEPTEMBER			
16-18	UYL MD1	-	-
Sat 20	Ipswich Town *(2pm)*	H	-
Tue 23	Northampton Town *(FLT MD2, Sky)*	A	-
Sat 27	Stoke City *(2pm)*	H	-
30-1	UYL MD2	-	-
OCTOBER			
Sun 5	Burnley *(12pm)*	A	-
Sat 18	Dinamo Zagreb *(PLIC MD1, 2pm)*	H	-
21/22	UYL MD3	-	-
Sat 25	Arsenal *(2pm)*	H	-
Tue 28	Walsall *(FLT MD3, Sky)*	A	-
Fri 31	Everton	A	-
NOVEMBER			
4/5	UYL MD4	-	-
Sat 8	Reading *(2pm)*	H	-
25/26	UYL MD5	-	-
DECEMBER			
Wed 3	Paris Saint-Germain *(PLIC MD2)*	H	-
9/10	UYL MD6	-	-
JANUARY			
Wed 7	Benfica *(PLIC MD3)*	H	-
Sat 10	Crystal Palace *(2pm)*	H	-
Fri 16	West Ham United	A	-
Wed 21	Real Sociedad *(PLIC MD4)*	H	-
Mon 26	Leicester City	A	-
Sat 31	Southampton *(2pm)*	H	-
FEBRUARY			
Sat 7	Blackburn Rovers *(2pm)*	H	-
Fri 13	Birmingham City	A	-
Sat 21	Leeds United *(2pm)*	H	-
Fri 27	Manchester United	A	-
MARCH			
Sat 14	Sunderland *(2pm)*	H	-
Fri 20	Wolverhampton Wanderers	A	-
APRIL			
Fri 10	Fulham	A	-

All games kick off at 7pm unless stated
FLT - Football League Trophy
UYL - U19s UEFA Youth League
PLIC - Premier League International Cup
H - Kingsmeadow Stadium

APPEARANCES 2025/26
Emenalo 3, Harrison 3, Mheuka 3, Murray-Campbell 3, Wilson 3, Antwi 2+1, Cardoso 2+1, Kavuma-McQueen 2+1, McMahon 2+1, Walsh 2+1, Curd 2, Derry 1+2, Olise 1+2, Best 1+1, D Richards 1+1, Slonina 1, Tauriainen 1, Ezenwata 0+1

GOALS 2025/26
Mheuka 5, Derry 1, Kavuma-McQueen 1, Murray-Campbell 1, D Richards 1

U18s

HASSAN SULAIMAN

HEAD COACH

We are now two games into the season, having played league and cup matches, so it's a good time to reflect on the summer for the Under-18s squad.

We had good pre-season. It was great to see the boys and quite a few of them managed to get some really good exposure to the Under-21s pre-season camp.

As a result of that, a number of schoolboys were able to work with us across the first few weeks of preparations as well. So, from a development perspective, I think pre-season was a fantastic opportunity to really stretch the boys.

As the season drew nearer, we started to get our group back together and that's when we really started to zoom in on what we wanted to look like for the season, trying to build the togetherness of the squad and the competitiveness too.

I was really confident going into the opening game against Crystal Palace, who had started the season a week before us and came into the match off the back of winning 8-0. So they were on a high and we knew we needed to be at our best to beat them.

Going to Crystal Palace is never an easy task. They're always physical, they're always aggressive, they make it difficult for you to stamp your authority on the game. So they were disciplined and we found it challenging to really get into our flow, but having said that, we went 1-0 up on six minutes, which was great. At that point, you might have thought we were going to cruise it, but by half-time we found ourselves 2-1 down.

Crystal Palace were very rigid in their defensive structure, they made things hard for us, and half-time was an opportunity to look at ways that we could break them down. We managed to find a solution to what was a very stubborn Crystal Palace defensive line, which was to find space around the sides and not necessarily through the middle.

By the midway point of the second half, we'd gone 3-2 up, which was great. We were back in control of the game and we went on to seal it with a fourth goal, which was probably the most bizarre own goal I've ever seen in academy football.

Their left centre-half got the ball from the goalkeeper, who took up a position on the right-hand side of the area, like a right centre-half. So Chizzy Ezenwata went from pressing the goalie to pressing the left centre-back, who turned and blindly played it back to the goal, which the goalkeeper had vacated, so it literally rolled into an empty net. There was an air of silence as everyone took it in, but it put us 4-2 up and helped us to manage the last part of the game.

Overall, it was a good game for us. The first goal in particular was a great example of what we want from our No10, pulling the centre-half out of position, which created the space for Mathis Eboue to play a ball through to Sol Gordon up front. He was making his movement from outside to in and he raced in behind before playing a fantastic ball across the box to find Kobe Barbour. If we can't go through then we have to go around or we have to go over, and it was good to see the variation in our play.

The other goals were scored by Chizzy, with a great free-kick, and Mathis, to add to his assist.

23.08.25, Under-18 Premier League

Crystal Palace 2
Casey 14 pen, Walker-Smith 20

Chelsea 4
Barbour 6, Ezenwata 66, Eboue 69, Walker-Smith o.g. 90+1

Chelsea (4-3-3): Bernal; L Richards, Waite, Subuloye (c), Diakite (McGlinchey h/t); Watson (Badu h/t), Nicoll-Jazuli, Eboue (Atherton 80); Barbour (Idrissi 80), Gordon, Ezenwata

Kobe Barbour (far left) and Chizzy Ezenwata (left) were both on the scoresheet in our 4-2 win over Crystal Palace to start the season. Ibrahim Rabbaj taking instructions from Hassan Sulaiman (opposite page bottom) in our 3-3 draw against Sheffield United in the PL Cup, in which Sol Gordon (opposite page top) converted a stoppage-time penalty

There was no rest for us as we went straight into the Premier League Cup on Tuesday, drawing 3-3 in our first group-stage game against Sheffield United.

It was an opportunity to give some game time to those who didn't play at the weekend, and for quite a few of them, Under-18s football was new. Chris Atherton came in for his first start, after coming here from Northern Ireland, and Ibrahim Rabbaj also started the game, along with quite a number of other changes.

We started the game well, showing good control, and were really measured in our play, and then unfortunately we conceded a goal against the run of play, from a mistake. Sol pulled us level with a good press on their goalkeeper to regain possesion and tap in, but we then fell 2-1 behind around the halfway mark in the first half.

Shortly after half-time we found ourselves 3-1 down, which was really disappointing. So naturally we had to try and change and adapt. And, credit to the boys, they showed that adaptability as we came back to draw the game 3-3 with a late equaliser.

It was definitely not the performance we wanted and the boys were disappointed to draw a game they felt they needed to win, especially as we have two tough games to come in the group stage, against Manchester City and Crystal Palace.

We return to action today at home to Aston Villa in the league before the first international break begins.

26.08.25, Under-18 Premier League Cup

Chelsea 3
Gordon 18, 75, 90+2 pen

Sheffield United 3
Couborough 7, Eyob-Abraha 23, 48

Chelsea (4-3-3): Collinson; Wheeler-Henry (Idrissi 68), Subuloye (c), Hall (Isago Silva 85), McGlinchey (Diakite 68); Badu, Rabbaj, L Richards; Atherton, Gordon, Barbour

U18s 2025/26

Date	Opposition		Res
AUGUST			
Sat 23	Crystal Palace	A	4-2
Tue 26	Sheffield United *(U18 PLC MD1)*	H	3-3
Sat 30	Aston Villa *(12pm)*	H	-
SEPTEMBER			
Sat 13	Arsenal	A	-
Tue 16	Charlton Athletic *(U17 PLC MD1, 2pm)*	H	-
Sat 20	Brighton & Hove Albion	H	-
Sat 27	West Bromwich Albion *(12pm)*	A	-
Tue 30	Southampton *(U17 PLC MD2)*	A	-
OCTOBER			
Sat 4	Manchester City *(U18 PLC MD2)*	A	-
Sat 18	Tottenham Hotspur	H	-
Tue 21	Brighton & Hove Albion *(U17 PLC MD3, 2pm)*	H	-
Sat 25	Reading	A	-
NOVEMBER			
Sat 1	Southampton	A	-
Sat 8	Norwich City *(12.30pm)*	H	-
Sat 22	Crystal Palace *(U18 PLC MD3)*	A	-
Sat 29	West Ham United	A	-
DECEMBER			
Sat 6	Fulham	H	-
Sat 6	FAYC 3	-	-
Sat 13	Ipswich Town *(12pm)*	A	-
JANUARY			
Sat 10	Birmingham City *(12pm)*	H	-
Sat 17	Leicester City *(12pm)*	A	-
Sat 24	Crystal Palace	H	-
Sat 31	Norwich City	A	-
FEBRUARY			
Sat 7	Arsenal	H	-
Sat 14	Aston Villa *(12pm)*	A	-
Sat 21	Southampton	H	-
MARCH			
Sat 7	West Bromwich Albion *(12pm)*	H	-
Sat 14	Brighton & Hove Albion	A	-
Tue 17	Tottenham Hotspur	A	-
Sat 21	Reading	H	-
APRIL			
Sat 11	West Ham United	H	-
Sat 18	Fulham	A	-
Sat 25	Ipswich Town *(12pm)*	H	-
MAY			
Sat 2	Birmingham City *(12pm)*	A	-
Sat 9	Leicester City *(12pm)*	H	-

All games kick off at 11am unless stated
U18 PLC - U18s Premier League Cup
U17 PLC - U17s Premier League Cup
FAYC - FA Youth Cup
H - Cobham Training Ground

APPEARANCES 2025/26
Barbour 2, Gordon 2, L Richards 2, Subuloye 2, Atherton 1+1, Badu 1+1, Diakite 1+1, McGlinchey 1+1, Bernal 1, Collinson 1, Eboue 1, Ezenwata 1, Hall 1, Nicoll-Jazuli 1, Rabbaj 1, Waite 1, Watson 1, Wheeler-Henry 1, Idrissi 0+2, Isago Silva 0+1

GOALS 2025/26
Gordon 3 (1 pen), Barbour 1, Eboue 1, Ezenwata 1, own goal 1

ALL THESE COMPETITIONS IN ONE PLACE

not NORMAL

Premier League

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE

UEFA CONFERENCE LEAGUE

Emirates FA CUP

Adobe WFA CUP

TNT SPORTS

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BLUES DISCOVER CHAMPIONS LEAGUE OPPONENTS

The draw for the league phase of the UEFA Champions League took place in Monaco on Thursday. Here's who we will come up against...

Chelsea are returning to Europe's top table this season after a two-year absence, and our eight opponents in the league phase of the Champions League will be: Barcelona, Benfica, Ajax and Pafos (all at Stamford Bridge), with away fixtures against Bayern Munich, Atalanta, Napoli and Qarabag.

The Champions League format has changed since we were last in the competition in 2022/23, with the league phase – which replaced the group stage – consisting of four fixtures at home and four away against a total of eight different opponents.

There are 36 teams in the league phase and for the draw the clubs were split into four pots based on their individual coefficient ranking. The Blues were among the sides in Pot 1 and the automated software drew our eight opponents, ensuring we'd face two teams from each of the four pots, with one home and one away match against teams from each pot.

The top eight sides in the league will qualify automatically for the round of 16, while the teams finishing in ninth to 24th place will compete in a two-legged knock-out phase play-off to secure their path to the last 16 of the competition. Teams that finish 25th or lower will be eliminated, with no access to the UEFA Europa League.

This is the 71st season of the European Cup, and 34th since it became the Champions League, and the final will be held at the Puskas Arena in Budapest, Hungary, on 30 May 2026.

2025/26 LEAGUE PHASE CLUBS

Team	Country
Ajax	Netherlands
Arsenal	England
Atalanta	Italy
Athletic Bilbao	Spain
Atletico Madrid	Spain
Barcelona	Spain
Bayer Leverkusen	Germany
Bayern Munich	Germany
Benfica	Portugal
Bodo/Glimt	Norway
Borussia Dortmund	Germany
Chelsea	England
Club Brugge	Belgium
Copenhagen	Denmark
Eintracht Frankfurt	Germany
Galatasaray	Turkey
Inter Milan	Italy
Juventus	Italy
Kairat Almaty	Kazakhstan
Liverpool	England
Manchester City	England
Marseille	France
Monaco	France
Napoli	Italy
Newcastle United	England
Olympiacos	Greece
Pafos	Cyprus
Paris Saint-Germain	France
PSV	Netherlands
Qarabag	Azerbaijan
Real Madrid	Spain
Slavia Prague	Czechia
Sporting CP	Portugal
Tottenham Hotspur	England
Union Saint-Gilloise	Belgium
Villarreal	Spain

LEAGUE PHASE MATCHDAYS

Matchday 1	16-18 September 2025
Matchday 2	30 September/1 October 2025
Matchday 3	21/22 October 2025
Matchday 4	4/5 November 2025
Matchday 5	25/26 November 2025
Matchday 6	9/10 December 2025
Matchday 7	20/21 January 2026
Matchday 8	28 January 2026

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Lincoln City await in Carabao Cup

Chelsea have been handed an away trip to Lincoln City in the third round of the Carabao Cup.

The Blues and eight other Premier League clubs competing in Europe this season enter the competition at this stage, and our quest to get our hands on the trophy for the first time since 2015 begins on the road against League One opposition.

The Imps have started their league campaign strongly and beat Harrogate Town and Burton Albion to reach the third round. This will be our ninth meeting with them, with the last taking place in 1911.

Ties in the Carabao Cup third round will be split across two midweeks due to clubs participating in the Champions League and Europa League, with our fixture set to be held in the week commencing 22 September.

There are no replays in the Carabao Cup and extra-time is not used until the semi-final stage, so if the scores are level after 90 minutes there will be a penalty shoot-out to decide the winner.

Full fixture and ticket information will follow in due course.

NUMBERS GAME

WORDS • PAUL DUTTON

The Blues are on a run of 15 wins from our last 18 matches across all competitions (one draw, two defeats). In the Premier League, we have won six out of our last eight games (one draw, one defeat).

Our 5-1 victory over West Ham was our joint-biggest winning margin in an away game against the Hammers, equalling our 4-0 triumph at Upton Park in 2007/08. It was also our 50th league win against the Hammers overall.

It was just the 10th time in Premier League history that a team has scored five or more goals in their first away game of the season. The Blues were also the last to do so, winning 6-2 away to Wolves last season, and we've now scored five or more goals (also 5-1 v Southampton last term) in more Premier League away games than any other side since Enzo Maresca took charge last summer.

Under Maresca, Chelsea have picked up more points in Premier League London derbies since the start of last season than any other side (26 – seven wins, five draws, two defeats).

We scored goals from three of our five corners at West Ham, matching our only previous instance of scoring three goals from corners in a Premier League match (4-3 win against Watford, May 2017).

Estevao Willian is the third youngest Brazilian player to appear in the Premier League (18y 115d), after Rafael for Manchester United (18y 39d, 2008) and Gabriel Martinelli for Arsenal (18y 54d, 2019). He has also become the youngest Chelsea player to claim a Premier League assist.

CHELSEA'S YOUNGEST PREMIER LEAGUE ASSISTERS

Date	Player	Opponent	Age
22.08.25	Estevao	West Ham United	18y 120d
03.04.19	Callum Hudson-Odoi	Brighton and Hove Albion	18y 147d
12.04.93	Neil Shipperley	Wimbledon	18y 164d
05.04.98	Jon Harley	Derby County	18y 191d
23.12.12	Lucas Piazon	Aston Villa	18y 338d

That assist, which was for Enzo Fernandez to score our third goal at West Ham, came from a move of 16 passes in 46 seconds, starting with a Chelsea goal kick.

No Chelsea player has been directly involved in more goals (16), scored more goals (seven) or provided more assists (nine) across all competitions in 2025 than Fernandez.
Most goal contributions in 2025:
Enzo Fernandez **16**, Cole Palmer **13**, Pedro Neto **11**, Marc Cucurella and Tyrique George **8**.

Fulham won at Stamford Bridge last season on Boxing Day, ending our 21-game unbeaten home league run against our SW6 neighbours which had lasted for 45 years. They are aiming to achieve back-to-back league wins at the Bridge for the first time ever.

We're unbeaten at home in the Premier League since that game, winning eight and drawing three of the subsequent 11 matches.

This is only the second time we've hosted Fulham in August. The last time was back in 1967, when Tommy Baldwin scored our goal in a 1-1 draw.

Chelsea have won each of our last five Premier League games kicking off at 12.30pm on a Saturday, including a 1-0 home win over Fulham in January 2024. Marco Silva's side have lost each of their last four games in the competition at that time without scoring a single goal.

Last season's tally of 54 points was Fulham's best ever in a Premier League season.

Emile Smith Rowe came off the bench to score in Fulham's last league game, a 1-1 draw against Manchester United. It was their 19th Premier League goal by a substitute (including both of their goals here last season) since August 2024, which is four more than any other team in that period.

We have won 10 of our last 13 Premier League meetings with our neighbours, with one draw and two defeats in the other three matches.

Against West Ham, Moises Caicedo made his 100th Chelsea appearance, Marc Cucurella started a Blues game for the 100th time and Rob Sanchez made his 50th appearance in the Premier League for the club.

The Premier League transfer window closes on Monday at 7pm. Since our last programme went to print, Renato Veiga has joined Villarreal, Carney Chukwuemeka has signed for Borussia Dortmund, and Aaron Anselmino has also joined the Bundesliga club on loan for the season.

PREMIER LEAGUE TABLE 2025/26

			HOME					AWAY						
		Pld	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Arsenal	2	1	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	1	0	+6	6
2	Tottenham	2	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	2	0	+5	6
3	Liverpool	2	1	0	0	4	2	1	0	0	3	2	+3	6
4	**Chelsea**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**5**	**1**	**+4**	**4**
5	Nottm Forest	2	1	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	1	1	+2	4
6	Man City	2	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	4	0	+2	3
7	Sunderland	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	2	+1	3
8	Everton	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	+1	3
9	Bournemouth	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	4	-1	3
10	Brentford	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	3	-1	3
11	Burnley	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	-1	3
12	Leeds	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	5	-4	3
13	Fulham	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	2
14	Crystal Palace	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
15	Newcastle	2	0	0	1	2	3	0	1	0	0	0	-1	1
16	Man Utd	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	-1	1
17	Aston Villa	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	-1	1
18	Brighton	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	1
19	Wolves	2	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	1	0	1	-5	0
20	West Ham	2	0	0	1	1	5	0	0	1	0	3	-7	0

Correct up to and including 25.08.25

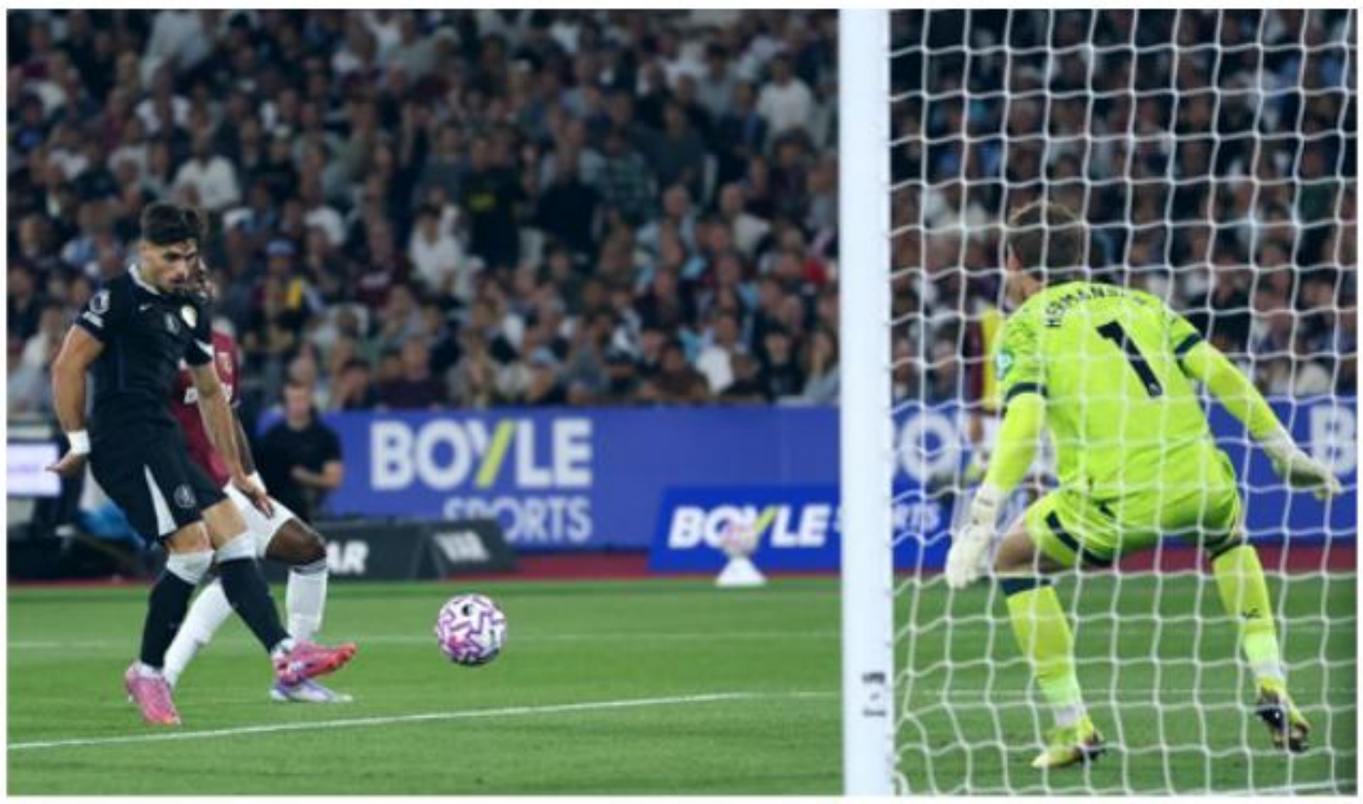
PLAYER STATISTICS 2025/26

		APPEARANCES						GOALS/CLEAN SHEETS					Total CFC apps, goals & clean sheets	
	Age	PL	UCL	FAC	LC	Total	Minutes	PL	UCL	FAC	LC	Total		
Acheampong	19	1	-	-	-	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	11+4	-
Badiashile	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49+6	2
Caicedo	23	2	-	-	-	2	199	1	-	-	-	1	94+6	4
Chalobah	26	2	-	-	-	2	175	1	-	-	-	1	82+24	6
Colwill	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	67+8	3
Cucurella	27	2	-	-	-	2	175	-	-	-	-	-	100+15	8
Delap	22	1+1	-	-	-	1+1	91	-	-	-	-	-	5+3	1
Essugo	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0+3	-
Estevao Willian	18	1+1	-	-	-	1+1	125	-	-	-	-	-	1+1	-
Fernandez	24	2	-	-	-	2	182	1	-	-	-	1	105+12	17
W Fofana	24	0+1	-	-	-	0+1	24	-	-	-	-	-	31+4	2
George	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10+16	3
Gittens	21	1+1	-	-	-	1+1	74	-	-	-	-	-	1+1	-
Gusto	22	1+1	-	-	-	1+1	92	-	-	-	-	-	57+30	-
Hato	19	0+1	-	-	-	0+1	24	-	-	-	-	-	0+1	-
Jackson	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70+11	30
James	25	1+1	-	-	-	1+1	107	-	-	-	-	-	142+50	14
Joao Pedro	23	2	-	-	-	2	176	1	-	-	-	1	4+1	4
Jorgensen	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	10
Lavia	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15+8	-
Neto	25	2	-	-	-	2	199	1	-	-	-	1	41+12	10
Nkunku	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27+35	18
Palmer	23	1	-	-	-	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	88+10	43
Sanchez	27	2	-	-	-	2	199	1	-	-	-	1	63	19
Santos	21	0+2	-	-	-	0+2	48	-	-	-	-	-	1+5	-
Slonina	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tosin	27	1	-	-	-	1	99	-	-	-	-	-	34+8	5

Correct up to and including 22.08.25

FIXTURES & RESULTS

Date	Opposition		KO/Res	Attendance	Formation	Starting XI					
AUGUST											
Sun 17	Crystal Palace	H	0-0	39,678	4-1-4-1	Sanchez	James (c)	Acheampong	Chalobah	Cucurella	Caicedo
Fri 22	West Ham United	A	5-1	62,462	4-1-4-1	Sanchez	Gusto	Chalobah	Tosin	Cucurella	Caicedo
Sat 30	Fulham *(TNT)*	H	12.30pm								
SEPTEMBER											
Sat 13	Brentford *(Sky)*	A	8pm								
16/17/18	UCL MD1	-	-								
Sat 20	Manchester United *(Sky)*	A	5.30pm								
23/24	Lincoln City *(CC3)*	A	-								
Sat 27	Brighton & Hove Albion	H	3pm								
30/1	UCL MD2	-	-								
OCTOBER											
Sat 4	Liverpool *(Sky)*	H	5.30pm								
Sat 18	Nottingham Forest *(TNT)*	A	12.30pm								
21/22	UCL MD3	-	-								
Sat 25	Sunderland	H	3pm								
Wed 29	CC 4	-	-								
NOVEMBER											
Sat 1	Tottenham Hotspur	A	3pm								
4/5	UCL MD4	-	-								
Sat 8	Wolverhampton Wanderers	H	3pm								
Sat 22	Burnley	A	3pm								
25/26	UCL MD5	-	-								
Sat 29	Arsenal	H	3pm								
DECEMBER											
Wed 3	Leeds United	A	-								
Sat 6	Bournemouth	A	3pm								
9/10	UCL MD6	-	-								
Sat 13	Everton	H	3pm								
Wed 17	CC QF	-	-								
Sat 20	Newcastle United	A	3pm								
Sat 27	Aston Villa	H	3pm								
Tue 30	Bournemouth	H	-								
JANUARY											
Sat 3	Manchester City	A	3pm								
Wed 7	Fulham	A	-								
Sat 10	FAC 3	-	-								
Wed 14	CC SF-1	-	-								
Sat 17	Brentford	H	3pm								
20/21	UCL MD7	-	-								
Sat 24	Crystal Palace	A	3pm								
Wed 28	UCL MD8	-	-								
Sat 31	West Ham United	H	3pm								
FEBRUARY											
Wed 1	CC SF-2	-	-								
Sat 7	Wolverhampton Wanderers	A	3pm								
Wed 11	Leeds United	H	-								
Sat 14	FAC 4	-	-								
17/18	UCL KO PO-1	-	-								
Sat 21	Burnley	H	3pm								
24/25	UCL KO PO-2	-	-								
Sat 28	Arsenal	A	3pm								
MARCH											
Wed 4	Aston Villa	A	-								
Sat 7	FAC 5	-	-								
10/11	UCL R16-1	-	-								
Sat 14	Newcastle United	H	3pm								
17/18	UCL R16-2	-	-								
Sat 21	Everton	A	3pm								
Sun 22	CC final	W	-								
APRIL											
Sat 4	FAC QF	-	-								
7/8	UCL QF-1	-	-								
Sat 11	Manchester City	H	3pm								
14/15	UCL QF-2	-	-								
Sat 18	Manchester United	H	3pm								
Sat 25	Brighton & Hove Albion	A	3pm								
Sat 25	FAC SF	W	-								
28/29	UCL SF-1	-	-								
MAY											
Sat 2	Nottingham Forest	H	3pm								
5/6	UCL SF-2	-	-								
Sat 9	Liverpool	A	3pm								
Sat 16	FAC final	W	-								
Sun 17	Tottenham Hotspur	H	-								
Sun 24	Sunderland	A	4pm								
Sat 30	UCL final	PA	5pm								



Fixtures correct at time of going to press and are subject to change. Chelsea score shown first.
W - Wembley Stadium. PA - Puskas Arena, Budapest, Hungary. UCL - UEFA Champion's League. CC - Carabao Cup. FAC - FA Cup.

Goal Penalty scored Penalty missed Penalty save + Own goal

Premier League | UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE | Emirates FA CUP | Carabao Cup

					Used substitutes				
Neto	Fernandez	Palmer	Gittens	Joao Pedro	Estevao (54)	Delap (73)	Santos (79)	Gusto (79)	
Estevao	Joao Pedro ⚽	Fernandez (c) ⚽	Neto ⚽	Delap	Santos (62)	James (69)	Hato (69)	W Fofana (69)	Gittens (77)

Chelsea's goals in our 5-1 victory at the London Stadium were scored by Joao Pedro (top left), Pedro Neto (left), Enzo Fernandez (bottom left), Moises Caicedo (above) and Trevoh Chalobah

MEN'S HONOURS LIST

FOOTBALL LEAGUE/PREMIER LEAGUE
1955, 2005, 2006, 2010, 2015, 2017

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
2012, 2021

FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP
2025

UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE
2013, 2019

UEFA CONFERENCE LEAGUE
2025

EUROPEAN CUP WINNERS' CUP
1971, 1998

UEFA SUPER CUP
1998, 2021

FIFA INTERCONTINENTAL CUP*
2021

FA CUP
1970, 1997, 2000, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2018

FOOTBALL LEAGUE CUP
1965, 1998, 2005, 2007, 2015

FA CHARITY/COMMUNITY SHIELD
1955, 2000, 2005, 2009

FULL MEMBERS CUP
1986, 1990

DIVISION TWO
1984, 1989

*Formerly FIFA Club World Cup

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STADIUM POLICIES

PLAYING IT SAFE
The safety of all fans and visitors on a matchday is extremely important to us and there are some simple steps we can follow to ensure everybody is safe and secure at Stamford Bridge.
Our stewards are here to assist you and offer information.
Please remain vigilant and if you see anything you are unhappy with, we encourage you to report it to a steward or any member of staff as quickly as possible. We constantly review our security measures and while some of these are visible, others may not be so obvious, but all are aimed at ensuring that visitors remain safe.
Please remember our safety procedures are in place for the benefit of all and we ask you to show patience and support.

ARRIVE EARLY
The busiest period on a matchday is the half-hour leading up to kick-off. Please arrive as early as possible to avoid the biggest crowds.

TICKET CHECKS
Ticket checks are in place upon entering the stadium site so we ask that you have them ready for inspection when you arrive. You may also be asked to show your ticket at any time you are within the Stamford Bridge grounds.

OUR BAG POLICY
We ask fans to refrain from bringing bags to matches, any bag over A4 (100 x 200 x 300 mm) in size will be denied entry.
This ensures supporters are able to enter the stadium quickly and freely, as all bags and persons are subject to security searches prior to entering through the turnstiles. Please note there are no storage facilities at Stamford Bridge.

PERSISTENT STANDING
We ask that all supporters remain seated in their designated seat and do not block aisles.

SAFE STANDING (BARRIER/RAIL SEATING)
Safe standing in seated areas, it should be noted, is distinct both from persistent standing in seated areas, and from safe standing in conventional terraced standing accommodation. At Stamford Bridge in the Away Supporter Sections and the Matthew Harding Lower Tier, standing supporters are protected from the risks of forward movement by the installation of suitably designed independent barriers in front of each seat, or by the provision of suitably designed seats that incorporate barriers.

KEEP BAYS CLEAR FOR WHEELCHAIRS
During the pre-match warm-up, please do not enter bays at the front of stands marked for wheelchairs. The areas in front of the bays are emergency exit routes that should be kept clear, save for the movement of supporters in and out of the seating bowl. If you are standing pitchside, please move aside for wheelchair users to watch the warm-up.

NO SMOKING
Smoking is not permitted anywhere within the stadium at Stamford Bridge. The smoking of e-cigarettes or vapes is also forbidden. Any person in breach of these rules will be ejected.

CCTV
CCTV is in operation throughout the stadium for your safety and security.

MINIMUM UNACCOMPANIED SUPPORTER AGE CHANGE
Juveniles under the age of 16 will not be permitted entry unless accompanied by a person over the age of 18.

GET IN CONTACT
At Chelsea FC, we aim to deliver outstanding customer service.
You can contact the club by the following methods:
Phone: 0371 811 1955 (International: +44 207 386 9373)
Email: supporter.services@chelseafc.com
Post: Supporter Services, Chelsea Football Club, Stamford Bridge, Fulham Road, London SW6 1HS

IF YOU SEE OR EXPERIENCE ABUSE OR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AT THE STADIUM, REPORT IT.

NO TO HATE

DURING THE MATCH TEXT 88777 OR SCAN HERE

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Enzo MARESCA
Head coach

1	Robert SANCHEZ
3	Marc CUCURELLA
4	Tosin ADARABIOYO
5	Benoit BADIASHILE
6	Levi COLWILL
7	Pedro NETO
8	Enzo FERNANDEZ
9	Liam DELAP
10	Cole PALMER
11	Jamie GITTENS
12	Filip JORGENSEN
14	Dario ESSUGO
15	Nicolas JACKSON
17	Andrey SANTOS
18	Christopher NKUNKU
20	Joao PEDRO
21	Jorrel HATO
23	Trevoh CHALOBAH
24	Reece JAMES
25	Moises CAICEDO
27	Malo GUSTO
29	Wesley FOFANA
32	Tyrique GEORGE
34	Josh ACHEAMPONG
41	Estevao WILLIAN
44	Gabriel SLONINA
45	Romeo LAVIA

Marco SILVA
Head coach

1	Bernd LENO
2	Kenny TETE
3	Calvin BASSEY
5	Joachim ANDERSEN
6	Harrison REED
7	Raul JIMENEZ
8	Harry WILSON
9	Rodrigo MUNIZ
10	Tom CAIRNEY
11	Adama TRAORE
15	Jorge CUENCA
16	Sander BERGE
17	Alex IWOBI
18	Andreas PEREIRA
20	Sasa LUKIC
21	Timothy CASTAGNE
23	Benjamin LECOMTE
24	Josh KING
27	Martial GODO
30	Ryan SESSEGNON
31	Issa DIOP
32	Emile SMITH ROWE
33	Antonee ROBINSON

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

Rob JONES
(Referee)

Neil DAVIES
(Assistant referee)

Steve MEREDITH
(Assistant referee)

Dean WHITESTONE
(Fourth official)

Michael SALISBURY
(VAR)

Scott LEDGER
(Assistant VAR)

NEXT MATCH

Saturday 13 September
Premier League
Brentford
Gtech Community Stadium (8pm)

All information correct
at time of going to print

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Bingx

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